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the young wife, her mother was the wife of a man then alive. She had two or three children who died. When the mother's husband died, Domingo took her as his wife, but this was after he had married her daughter" /cited in English/.

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A final obstacle to marriage is based on a sort of sponsorship namely, on the relationship of all adults to the candidates who have been entrusted to their special care in the Kina'ga, the youth initiation. Their relationship is regarded as that of parents to their children, accompanied by certain rights or duties which never cease as long as one of the two parties is living.

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The community as a whole, especially the relatives, are vigilant regarding the valid obstacles to marriage; it is their duty to interfere if anyone dares to violate them. Infringements by individual persons in exceptional cases and more recently as a result of the unusual composition of the population cannot be avoided, since the public does not have effective measures of control and since the guilty party avoids the loud mockery and scornful gossip of his neighbors by keeping to himself. The erection of certain barriers in the form of real obstacles to marriage proves with unmistakable clarity how highly the Yamana regard the institution of marriage and the sound judgment they show in evaluating the meaning of their only social alliance. My questions about the possibility of a marital union between relatives and adopted persons obviously horrified them, and they found it unpleasant that such prohibitions, which are sacred and venerable to them, should be even casually mentioned.

8. The Marriage Ceremony

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In the foregoing pages we have described the development from the first slight amorous inclinations of two young hearts to their definite decision to marry, as well as the attitude of the relatives of the couple. The lovers never link themselves together in a definite, solemn declaration of their willingness to marry, as in the manner of our engagement. Nor do the Yamana know anything

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515 about an actual marriage proposal following definite formalities, such as are /655/ practiced by the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 356). They do, however, have an actual marriage celebration with certain conspicuous accompaniments, which they regard as legalizing the conclusion of a marriage.

It is easy to explain why earlier travelers did not understand this custom in its deeper significance, if, indeed, they had a chance to observe it, and that they saw in it only one of the universally common facial decorations. They should at least have avoided an abrupt denial of any kind of marriage ceremony, such as Bove (e):156, for example, did when he definitely maintained: "No festivity, no ceremony accompanies the wedding, which simply consists of the bride's going to the hut of the bridegroom or of the latter's settling down with his father-in-law" (35).

35. Hyades (b):1346 and (p):334 is as inaccurate as he is insistent when he tries to make out that "the marriage is accomplished without any ceremony" /translated from French/. According to Spegazzini (a):164 the marriage is concluded "very simply among them" /translated from Spanish/.

Bridges (e):333 made a slight concession, without grasping its real meaning: "The marriage ceremony was quite unimportant; there was no contract, no gathering of friends, no festivity, but they simply painted the face of the bride and sent her to her future husband in the best attire that they were able to afford." In contrast to this, we must emphasize that our informants positively established the socially valid significance of their ceremonies for the first marriage of a couple. These ceremonies were also regularly conducted, for without this public announcement the union of the two young people would not have been recognized as a valid marriage, but would have been regarded as a free, impermissible love affair.

585 302 Among all the things that surround and accompany a wedding of those who are united for the first time, the facial painting of the bride and groom is the most significant feature. Like a public

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declaration, it announces to the neighborhood and therewith to the entire tribe the free decision of both parties. It is this visible sign that proclaims the marriage as legally concluded (36). It

36. Since Hyades (q):378 did not understand the significance of this facial painting, he contradicts himself in the following assertion: "The marriage does not give rise to any special ceremony; the young girl adorns herself more on this day, at least with facial paintings and with necklaces which she receives as gifts, and the hair on her forehead is cut" /translated from French/. In view of the little sense of form that our Yamana have developed, all these details certainly mean display enough!

binds the bridegroom as well as the bride, and the painting in this special form is used exclusively for the wedding. It consists of three parallel, horizontal red stripes of medium width which begin at the edge of the nostril and are drawn across the cheeks almost up to the ear lobes (Fig. 77). For about a week the newlyweds appear with this painting, which is carefully renewed every day. The lomi is mixed with seal blubber and applied with a little stick to achieve even, fine lines, a neat application being particularly prized (37).

37. Spears: 69 was the only one who learned of this custom: "The marriage ceremony consisted in painting the girl in a certain fashion for several days before she was delivered to her husband" /cited in English/. Among the Selk'nam (Vol. I, 331) a "wedding decoration" is prescribed, which in style corresponds exactly with that of the Yamana.

/856/ The young people whose parents have cleared the way for their marriage begin this facial painting as soon as one of their

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585 382 relatives, usually the mothers, notifies them that the big feast is soon to take place. A few related families are informed or specially fetched, and the men go hunting to collect a great deal of meat which the women prepare for roasting. Although no particular day is set, the general mood or the momentary decision of the relatives, or even the unpredictable weather, brings about the ceremonious delivery of the bride or the bridegroom to the hut occupied by the other party. /Fig. 77 appears here./ In this manner they are influenced by given circumstances; usually the bride moved into the hut of her new parents-in-law. A few hours earlier the news spontaneously spreads that this formality is about to take place, and everyone present prepares for it in happy excitement. The bride and bridegroom are once more carefully painted and somewhat dressed up with a new fur cloak. The other people also paint their faces, usually with the fine vertical red lines from below the eyelid, over the cheeks, to the level of the corner of the mouth. Finally, at a large fire outside the dwelling where the bridal couple is to meet, a few women roast the large amounts of meat. Messengers go from one hut to another to see how the preparations are progressing. At the appropriate moment a few women, followed by children and neighbors, accompany the bride to the hut occupied by the bridegroom. This procession is regarded as the core of the ceremony. Sometimes there is more formality, for example, when the bridegroom himself, surrounded by a few relatives, approaches the hut of his bride and invites her to follow him to the hut of his father. She joins him in the procession. There the happy celebration begins.

Fig. 77. Facial Painting of the Bride.

585 Young and old enjoy themselves at the abundant meal; there is lively conversation, and finally the wedding guests give eloquent expression to their joy in dance and play. They remain together many hours, and it is only general fatigue that puts an end to the celebration. The bridal couple do not yet have a hut of their own

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and spend the night at the place where the celebration /657/ took
place (38). Here the people of the neighborhood again assemble

38. Bove (e):138, and Wieglandt:41 as well, maintain: "If the bridegroom does not wish to forgo forever the enjoyment of eating guanaco and veal meat, he must cleanse himself on the morning after the wedding by bathing in the water of the sea.... These baths are without doubt the cause of many sicknesses to which the young people of Tierra del Fuego are subjected, but they are regarded as necessary to replace the lost strength." When I asked my informants whether a bridegroom was obliged to take a bath, they could not keep from laughing, they found it so preposterous. It is almost childish to attribute "many sicknesses" to this alleged custom. Whenever someone has washed himself in the sea, he immediately hastens to the fire.

in the days that follow, until the supply of meat is gone, the joyful mood has abated, and the long sojourn at the same place becomes boring. Meanwhile the bride often hastens to the hut of her mother where the two console each other in expressions of mutual affection, for soon the hour of parting will come. Each time the mother carefully paints her daughter with the three horizontal lines, in order that she will be pleasing to her young husband and he will learn to love her. Many of the male guests give the bridegroom their good wishes and occasionally drop a warning word. The principals themselves are silent and are quite content in their own happiness. When all the wedding guests have dispersed and gone their separate ways, the newlyweds, who have meanwhile acquired their own canoe, also leave the place. They begin their independent life, free of their parents, and this is encouraged by very special rules applicable to parents-in-law and children-in-law.

A new family has now been established. The public regards this event as so significant that they feel the necessity of surrounding it with legal formality (39). The modern confusion brought

39. Cooper Bridges (e):332, too, apparently lets his understanding of this come through:

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"Marriage was recognized just as much as all other degrees of relationship, for all of which they [the Yamana] have their specific terms."

about by the dominance of European civilization has strangled this judicious tribal custom, along with much that was original. The Indians of today regret that some of their countrymen enter a marriage without the ceremony of former times. Mary, who was indignant over the widespread lack of form, very much lamented these conditions: "A woman, after all, is not an object, not a piece of wood or something, that one takes without ceremony. A girl who gives herself to a man without the formalities customary among us is not a real woman. It was so nice in former times when the painted bride was given to the bridegroom, who was also painted. Everybody was very happy on those occasions!" Again it is European influence that has killed the feeling for their native tribal customs among the younger generation. I learned the bulk of what is contained in the preceding pages from reliable old Alfredo on my second journey.

/658/ 9. Parents-In-Law and Children-In-Law

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In the days before and after the wedding, the bridegroom is very obliging and anxious to serve his parents-in-law. There is no legal obligation for service in the form of work or for gifts, but it is a matter of concern to him to obtain the favor of the girl's parents in order that they will surely and without reservation give their consent to the planned marriage. It is well known that a certain shyness prevents the lovers from revealing their turbulent desires. One day shortly before the wedding, when the love of the two young people has already become known, the bridegroom, in order to gain admittance into the hut of the girl's parents, places a rather large bundle of wood in front of the hut and waits until he is called in (40). If this happens, he interprets it as the surest

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40. It is well known that among the Selk'nam, also, the young chap who is anxious to marry resorts to silent, patient waiting in front of the

836 tion. Intercourse between the unmarried was disapproved, but
breaches of the code were not infrequent. Marriage between blood
582 relatives, however distant, was in theory taboo; in practice, the pro-
hibition included half-siblings, uncle and niece, aunt and nephew, first
cousins, both parallel and cross, and seemingly extended somewhat
beyond these limits. Since near relatives commonly lived near one
another, marriages tended to be locally endogamous. Marriages with
mates from far distant localities, especially outside one's own of the
five dialectic groups, were disliked and infrequent. Marriage with a
mother and her daughter was disapproved, but not so strongly as mar-
riage with near blood-kin. Sponsors were barred from marrying
their respective candidates of the čiźraus[1] initiation rite.

584 Choice of mate was ordinarily free on the part both of the boy and of
583 the girl, and appears to have been based largely on mutual affection and
regard. Gifts from the groom to the bride's father were given and
expected, as were also certain services before and after marriage. But
a bride-price as stipulated by or haggled for by the father was absent.
Bride capture or stealing, if it occurred, must have been very rare.

582 Boys and girls did not marry until they had passed through the
required čiźraus initiation. Gusinde (1937, p. 653) estimates the
more common chronological ages of first marriages as about 17 to 19
years for boys, and 15 to 16 for girls.

Monogamy was by far the most prevalent form of marriage. Poly-
583 andry did not occur. Polygyny was permitted, but was uncommon.
A few men had two wives, more commonly sisters; cases of three wives,
589 if they occurred, must have been very rare. On the death of a man's
wife, he had a certain marriage claim to her unmarried sister. On the
death of a woman's husband, she frequently became, and under certain
circumstances was expected or obliged to become, the wife of his oldest
surviving brother, especially his unmarried brother, unless she married
another man. This custom (the levirate) was, from the native point
of view, primarily an obligation of the father's brother to be responsi-
ble for his nephews and nieces, a responsibility that lay on the uncle
even though his brother's widow married another man. A surviving
married brother was not entirely free to marry the widow, as his own
wife might object.

585 The chief wedding rite consisted in painting the cheeks of the couple
with three red parallel horizontal lines. These were worn and re-
newed for a week, during which time there were feasting and dancing,
and at the end of which the couple went off together in their own canoe.
591 Customarily, they remained with the bride's people for a few months,

[1] č has the sound of English ch, ź of English zh.